

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
**Department of  
Health & Human  
Services**

## **Memorandum**

**Michigan Domestic &  
Sexual Violence Prevention &  
Treatment Board**  
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**TO: Members, House Law and Justice Committee**  
**FROM: Debi Cain, Executive Director, Michigan Domestic & Sexual Violence  
Prevention & Treatment Board**  
**DATE: May 21, 2018**  
**SUBJECT: HB 5795**

The Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board (“the Board”) is a seven member Governor appointed Board charged with funding sexual assault and domestic violence services for victims and providing policy recommendations on the issues of domestic violence and sexual assault.

The Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board (the Board) cannot support HB 5795 without additional changes.

The Board has made the following recommendations:

- 1. Refocus work of the office onto systems advocacy and state level coordination and move away from the investigatory model.** Replace section 4(a) with language that more broadly defines the duty as “Provide information on the rights, remedies, and resources available to campus sexual assault survivors.”
- 2. Eliminate Section 5.** The Board believes that the investigatory powers contained in section 5 offers a false promise to victims because the office does not have authority to change outcomes in any individual case.
- 3. Place the office in the Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board, Division of Victim Services.** The Board has substantial experience in this arena. The responsibilities articulated in section 3 of the proposed legislation complement the statewide systems response work to campus sexual assault already being done by the Board. They also dovetail with the Division’s significant sexual assault funding initiatives aimed at services for sexual assault survivors and training on sexual assault response for law enforcement, prosecutors, and advocates across the state, both on and off campus.

The Board in general supports assigning to the Board those legislative efforts and initiatives are consistent with the Board’s mission to lead statewide efforts to eliminate domestic and sexual violence. Doing so will create a unified voice within state government, reduce duplication of effort, reduce possible contradictory efforts, and enhance opportunities for efficiency, coordination and synergy. The Board believes that this will result in an office and

state response that better serves victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and their non-offending family members.

Thank you for your attention to these important matters. Please note that the Board's position and rationale is solely that of the Board and does not represent the views of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services or any other body. Although the Board is administratively housed within MDHHS, it is an independent, legislatively-created body with members appointed by the Governor. (See MCL 400.1502.)